

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12
SAA-01 SES-02 IO-13 SSM-03 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NEAE-00 /092 W
-----012990 081239Z /45

O P 081121Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9586
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 5212

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS PINT MILI ASEC LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION, SEPT. 8, 1978, 1200 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 5186 (DTG 071028Z SEP 78)

1. MORE FIGHTING IN BEIRUT.

A. THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 7-8 THERE WAS AGAIN FIGHTING
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BETWEEN SYRIAN SOLDIERS AND CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN
IN THE AYN AR-RUMMANEH AND HADATH AREAS. AS USUAL, BOTH
SIDES USED AUTOMATIC WEAPONS AND MORTARS AND THE SYRIANS
USED TANKS AND ARTILLERY AS WELL. THE FIGHTING BEGAN
AROUND 2000 HOURS SEPTEMBER 7 AND DIED DOWN EXCEPT FOR
OCCASIONAL SMALL ARMS FIRE AT 0700 HOURS SEPTEMBER 8.

B. NOTE: VARIOUS KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCES HAVE SAID THAT NO ROUNDS STRUCK THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE IN YARZE ON SEPTEMBER 6 AS REPORTED BY L'ORIENT-LE JOUR AND IKE (SEE SEPTEMBER 7 SITREP).

2. INCIDENT IN NORTH LEBANON.

UNIDENTIFIED ARMED MEN (POSSIBLY SUPPORTERS OF SULAYMAN FRANJIYAH) BROKE INTO THE HOME OF LUTFALLAH KHOURY, CUSTOMS CHIEF AT THE BEIRUT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, IN THE TOWN OF BTABURA IN THE NORTH LEBANESE DISTRICT OF KOURA ON SEPTEMBER 7. THE PHALANGE LEBANESE NEWS AGENCY REPORTED THAT THE MEN "INSULTED KHOURY'S SISTER, SUAD, BEAT HER AND DROVE HER OUT BEFORE DESTROYING THE TWO-FLOOR HOUSE WITH EXPLOSIVES." (COMMENT: THE BREAK-IN IS PROBABLY ANOTHER INCIDENT IN THE BATTLE BETWEEN SUPPORTERS OF FRANJIYAH AND THE PHALANGE PARTY FOR INFLUENCE IN NORTH LEBANON. END COMMENT.)

3. SOUTH LEBANON.

CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN IN MARJAYUN SHELLLED NABATIYAH FOR ABOUT TWO HOURS ON SEPTEMBER 7, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS. LOCAL RESIDENTS SAID FIVE PEOPLE WERE WOUNDED, IKE SAID. MEANWHILE, IKE ALSO REPORTED THAT ISRAELI
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PLANES CONDUCTED RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS OVER SOUTH LEBANON SEPTEMBER 7 AND CITED PALESTINIAN SOURCES AS SAYING FOUR ISRAELI GUNBOATS WERE SEEN OFF SOUTH LEBANON THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 7-8.

4. DORY CHAMOUN CRITICIZES WASHINGTON AND DAMASCUS.

IN A STATEMENT TO THE PRESS ON SEPTEMBER 7, NLP SECRETARY-GENERAL DORY CHAMOUN VIOLENTLY ATTACKED THE UNITED STATES AND SYRIA. DORY ACCUSED THE SYRIANS OF BEING "AN INSTRUMENT IN THE HANDS OF THE UNITED STATES WHO HAVE REFLOATED THE KISSINGER PLAN, AIMING AT INSTALLING THE PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON AND IN DEALING SEVERELY WITH ANY OPPONENT BEGINNING WITH THE CHRISTIANS AND FINISHING IN A LATER PHASE WITH THE PALESTINIANS THEMSELVES." CHAMOUN SAID THAT THE PROOF OF THE "SYRIAN-AMERICAN COLLUSION" WAS THE RELATIVE CALM IN LEBANON WHICH HAD PRECEDED THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT MEETING.

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5. HOUSE COMMITTEE APPROVES PARTS OF ARMY BILL.

THE DEFENSE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEES OF PARLIAMENT
ON SEPTEMBER 7 APPROVED PROVISIONS OF THE NEW
ARMY BILL CALLING FOR THE CREATION OF A HIGHER DEFENSE
COUNCIL AND A MILITARY COUNCIL. THE HIGHER DEFENSE
COUNCIL WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING DEFENSE-RELATED
DECISIONS AND THE MILITARY COUNCIL WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE
FOR IMPLEMENTING THEM. PRIME MINISTER AL HOSS HAILED
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THE STEP AS A MAJOR ACHIEVEMENT, BUT NLP LEADER CAMILLE
CHAMOUN SAID THAT THE ENTIRE BILL WOULD REMAIN NOTHING

BUT "INK ON PAPER" AS LONG AS "ONE NON-LEBANESE ARMED
MAN REMAINS IN LEBANON."

6. HIGH SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS POSTPONED INDEFINITELY.

-. MINISTER OF EDUCATION, ASSAD RIZK, ANNOUNCED ON
SEPTEMBER 7 THAT EXAMINATIONS FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL
BACCALAUREATE (PARTS I AND II) SCHEDULED FOR
SEPTEMBER 9 HAD BEEN POSTPONED INDEFINITELY. RIZK
EXPLAINED THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE 3,000 PROCTORS WHO
WERE SUPPOSED TO SUPERVISE THE EXAMINATIONS HAD
DECLARED THEIR UNWILLINGNESS TO DO SO, BECAUSE "SOME
OF THEM HAVE RECEIVED THREATS AND OTHERS HAVE HAD
THEIR CARS BLOWN UP." (AS NOTED IN SEPTEMBER 7 SITREP,
THE MARONITE PARTIES OPPOSE HOLDING THE EXAMINATIONS NOW,
BECAUSE MANY MARONITE YOUNG MEN HAVE BEEN OUT MANNING
THE BARRICADES RATHER THAN STUDYING.)

B. THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE EXAMINATIONS HAS ALREADY
BECOME SOMETHING OF A DOMESTIC POLITICAL ISSUE. AL
MURABITUN LEADER IBRAHIM QULAYLAT, A MUSLIM LEFTIST, TOLD
THE PRESS THAT HE HAD BEEN ASSURED BY PRIME MINISTER
SALIM AL HOSS THAT THE EXAMINATIONS WOULD NOT BE POST-
PONED. QULAYLAT MADE THE STATEMENT SHORTLY BEFORE
RIZK'S ANNOUNCEMENT.
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